

REMARKS

This communication is responsive to the final Office Action dated July 27, 2005.

The specification has been amended to correct various minor and obvious inadvertent errors relating to the drawing descriptions.

Claims 107-121 are currently pending and stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hawes et al. U.S. Patent 3,760,544. The rejections set forth in the Office Action are respectfully traversed.

Claims 107, 108 and 110 are independent claims, and have been amended herein to better distinguish over the Hawes reference. In particular, the claim amendments clarify that the muntin retainer extends substantially perpendicularly away from the upper platform or base of the clip, as clearly shown in the drawings. For example, Figure 20A shows muntin bar retainer 205 extending perpendicularly away from the upper platform of clip 200. Similar arrangements are illustrated in other figures, such as Figures 21A and 22A. Moreover, Figure 57C shows retainer 573 extending perpendicularly from clip 570.

The present invention provides clips for positioning window components, such as a muntin bar or additional glazing pane, between a pair of spaced glazing panes. To the contrary, the Hawes reference provides a sealing gasket for installation between adjacent panel sections of wall structures. Hawes does not disclose or even remotely suggest a “clip” structure. Instead, Hawes relates to a continuous gasket that is installed between the seams of wall panels. This gasket is not, and cannot be fairly considered to be, a “clip” as claimed by Applicants.

As illustrated, for example, in Applicants' Figure 9C, the clips 24 hold muntin bars 22 between the glazing panes 96 so that when the window is completed, it has a colonial or "divided light" look. The muntin bars must be aligned within the space between the glazing panes and typically do not touch the glazing panes; they are suspended therebetween. This result is accomplished by fabricating the clips such that the muntin bar retainers project perpendicularly to the base or platform from which they extend. See also, for example, Applicants' Figures 40, 41A, 43C, and 48 which illustrate how the muntin bars are suspended between the glazing panes to simulate the look of a true colonial window.

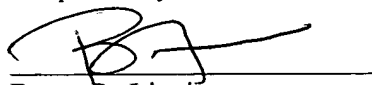
The Examiner contends that the structure shown in Hawes Figure 4 anticipates Applicants' claimed invention. In particular, with respect to the rejection of claims 107 and 110-121, the Examiner equates Hawes' stem portion 34 and flanges 36 to Applicants' claimed muntin retainer, and equates Hawes' flange 40 to Applicants' upper platform. It is respectfully submitted that stem portion 34 and flanges 36 of Hawes could not possibly serve as muntin retainers as claimed by Applicants, because the Hawes components extend at a significant obtuse angle from flange 40. Thus, there is no way that the stem portion and flanges 36 could maintain muntin bars properly spaced between parallel panes of glass. Moreover, Applicants do not understand how a gasket as disclosed by Hawes could possibly be used as a clip for mounting a muntin bar between glazing panes of an integrated sash. In order to clarify the distinction, Applicants' amended claims require the muntin retainer to be substantially perpendicular to the upper surface of the upper platform.

This limitation is clearly absent from Hawes, and without such structure, Hawes could not possibly function as a clip for mounting a muntin bar between glazing panes of an integrated sash.

In attempting to read Hawes on Applicants' claims 108-109, the Examiner equates Hawes' stiffener 38 to Applicants' base, and flanges 36 to Applicants' retainer. However, it would be impossible to retain one or more muntin bars on flanges 36, since these flanges are covered by cross portion 30. There is no way to insert a muntin bar onto flanges 36, because cross portion 30 would get in the way. Moreover, flanges 36 do not project substantially perpendicularly to the stiffener 38, as required by Applicants' claims 108-109. Accordingly, Hawes does not anticipate Applicants' claims.

In view of the above, the Examiner is respectfully requested to enter the present amendment, allow each of the pending claims, and to pass this application on to an early issue. If there are any remaining matters that need to be addressed in order to place this application into condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone Applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully Submitted,



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